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By Jay Franklin

**St. James Of Wall St.
Sharp, Narrow Mind
Valuable For GOP
Forrestal's Criticism**

Special To Journal-News.

Washington, Nov. 6.

The dotting editors of "The Forrestal Diaries" have done the late Democratic Secretary of Defense as great a disservice as did his traducers. If Jim Forrestal was not the knave and coward certain columnists accused him of being, neither was he "St. James of Wall Street." His diaries fortunately survive adoration and show him as the man he was.

They show Forrestal as a man with a sharp, narrow mind, without much force of character but with an agreeable personality. He was a Wall Street graduate who did not hesitate to place orders for B-36 bombers in order to save his successor, Louis Johnson, the embarrassment of granting defense contracts to Johnson's own firm. He was also an extremely able administrator, an amateur economist and a political sophomore in an administration distinguished by sloppy administration, economic razzle-dazzle and political illiteracy in foreign affairs. He shone, but part of his brilliance was by contrast.

His administrative abilities were undoubtedly great, though he lacked the guts to have a show-down with Stuart Symington when the latter, as Secretary of Air, made an insubordinate and disloyal speech. In economics, he was obsessed by the idea that failure to get control of Near Eastern oil meant that by 1950 we would be reduced to four-cylinder cars. In foreign policy, he thought that the

Russia was all that was required, though there is evidence that in 1944 when it was too late—he had qualms about Roosevelt's policy of reducing Germany to the power vacuum that invited the Soviets into the heart of Western Europe.

In domestic politics, he failed to understand that, as a member of a partisan Democratic administration, he ought to pull his weight. He kept hands off in the 1948 election—his advisers had warned him that Dewey would be elected. And then Forrestal was surprised and shocked when Mr. Truman called for his resignation on March 1, 1949.

But startling though such innocence appears in an experienced public man, it is as nothing to his revelation of the political imbecility of the Truman administration in making some of its major decisions. He reports that the reason for Marshall's fatal trip to China in 1946 was to rob Pat Hurley of some headlines. His diaries are a valuable mine for Republicans seeking ammunition for 1952. But what shall we think of Mr. Truman after this revelation?

In September of 1948, one year before Russia exploded the first Soviet atom bomb, our ambassador to Moscow, Gen. Bevell Smith, told Forrestal that "The Russians cannot have the industrial competence to produce the atomic bomb now, and it will be five or even 10 years before they could count on manufacture of it in quantity. They may well now have the note-book know-how but not the industrial complex to translate that abstract knowledge into concrete weapons."

This colossal miscalculation by our official military observer in the Soviet Union was rewarded by the Truman administration, by placing the man who was so dismally deficient in the realm of basic military intelligence, at the head of our Central Intelligence Agency. Jim Forrestal's personal incapacity in the realm of politics is as nothing to such colossal flops by those whom Truman delighted to honor.

Of Forrestal's tragic death by suicide, following a mental breakdown as a result of frustration and overwork, the book makes only the necessary mention. Yet this final act by a high-strung, sensitive man is the most effective criticism of his career in government. He had judged himself and the rest of us can well suspend judgment until the final returns are in.